

## **REMARKS/ARGUMENT**

### Description of amendments

Claims 1-10 are now pending and under examination, and claims 11-20 have been withdrawn.

### Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 1 and 4-10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 2003-211063 in view of Kropfield (U.S. Patent 5,810,254). Claims 1-10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Leidner (U.S. Patent 6,056,993) or Jayaraman (U.S. Patent Publication 2003/0099765) in view of Bhat (U.S. Patent 6,503,954), JP 2003-21106, and Kropfield. Claims 2 and 3 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 2003-211063 in view of Kropfield, and further in view of Leidner. Claims 2 and 3 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 2003-211063 in view of Kropfield, and further in view of Jayaraman. For the following reasons, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections.

Each of the rejections in the Office Action cites JP 2003-211063 as a reference. However, JP 2003-211063 is not prior art to the present application. The publication date of JP 2003-211063 is July 29, 2003, which is later than the filing date of the present application (June 26, 2003). (It should be noted that JP 2003-211063 is not prior art under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) because it is a foreign patent application.) Accordingly, each of the rejections in the Office Action is improper.

Application No. 10/606,712  
Amendment dated July 11, 2006  
Reply to Office action of June 16, 2006

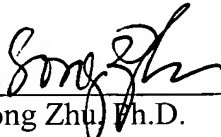
In light of the foregoing remarks, this application is considered to be in condition for allowance, and early passage of this case to issue is respectfully requested. If necessary to effect a timely response, this paper should be considered as a petition for an Extension of Time sufficient to effect a timely response, and please charge any deficiency in fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 07-1850.

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Respectfully submitted,

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